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DEPT FOR AF A A/S CARTER, AF/SPG, AF/E, AF/C
NSC FOR MGAVIN AND CHUDSON
ADDIS ABABA FOR USAU
DEPT PLS PASS USAID FOR AFR/SUDAN

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [ASEC](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [KPKO](#) [SOCI](#) [AU](#) [UNSC](#) [SU](#)
SUBJECT: UN DONOR PRINCIPALS' MEETING, FEBRUARY 24

REF: A) KHARTOUM 246
B) KHARTOUM 250

11. (SBU) Summary: In a February 24 meeting, UN Humanitarian officials told donor principals that contingency planning for the March 4 ICC announcement has not detracted from humanitarian operations, and that they plan to continue working. In Darfur, access to Muhajeriya and surrounding areas has improved but remains difficult, and there has been a significant movement of population there following last month's inter-rebel fighting and the retaking of the area by government forces. In the South, an escalation of attacks by the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) has displaced tens of thousands of people in the northern areas of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and South Sudan. In Abyei, UN officials noted that substantial, overall funds have been committed by donors but challenges remain, including bureaucratic impediments for humanitarians and lack of funding for the Abyei Civil Administration. Several donor principals urged the UN to do more to pressure the GOS on bureaucratic impediments and funding gaps. End Summary.

12. (SBU) On February 24, CDA Fernandez attended the monthly UN Donor Principals' Meeting chaired by UN Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Resident Coordinator and Humanitarian Coordinator (DSRSG/RC/HC) Ameerah Haq. Deputy Humanitarian Coordinator and Resident Coordinator Toby Lanzer briefed the principals on the humanitarian situation in Darfur, noting that while access in Muhajeriya and surrounding areas remains difficult, the two NGOs that were present in the area (Solidarits and MSF) have now resumed activity there. He stated that there has been significant population movement in the area, with over 20,000 residents of Muhajeriya having recently departed, along with an additional 30,000 from nearby villages. It was unclear whether these moves were voluntary, he said, with stories of people being paid to board trucks heading north. CDA Fernandez observed that the movement of people had an ethnic dimension, as Zaghawa fled the areas that ceased to be under Zaghawa (SLM/MM) military control, while original inhabitants from the Birgid tribe were moving back in, with GOS patronage. Thousands of Zaghawa are heading to Minnawi-controlled Zamzam IDP camp outside of El-Fasher. UN officials acknowledged this and stressed that they hoped to make a proper assessment of the situation after gathering additional information.

13. (SBU) Lanzer also expressed alarm that in West Darfur, INGOs have already suffered as many compound break-ins in the first two months of 2009 as they did during the entire year of 2008, noting that there has been an increase of militia activity in the region. On a positive note, he said that food insecurity across all of Darfur appears to have decreased, and thanked donors such as the U.S. for their continued commitments in this regard. Lanzer also stated that the UN remains dedicated to reaching out to a broader range of stakeholders, particularly rural communities, Arab tribes and

nomads, and praised UNICEF's education programs in this realm. He emphasized that UN humanitarian operations will continue despite the upcoming, March 4 ICC announcement of its decision on whether or not to issue an arrest warrant against President Bashir. "Our intention is to stay," he said.

13. (SBU) Daniel Augstburger, Head of UNAMID's Humanitarian Recovery, Development and Liaison Section (HRDLS) told the donors the peacekeeping force was extremely concerned with the continuing military activity on the ground following the Doha talks. He stated that UNAMID was looking to bolster its relationship with the JMST, because UNAMID will be in charge of implementing any security arrangements that result from future peace talks, and is also seeking closer coordination with the humanitarian community. He added UNAMID was engaged in "business continuity planning," but did not anticipate any problems from the ICC indictment announcement, citing assurances made by the GOS at the February 18 Tripartite meeting with the GOS, AU and UN (ref A). With regard to deployment, he stated that the peacekeeping force is 60% deployed but that more work needs to be done to bridge the gap between deployment of troops and their equipment, noting that while the Formed Police Unit (FPU) assigned to Zalingei has arrived, unfortunately its equipment has not. He added that these difficulties are a result of logistics, rather than government interference. He also stated that 70% of UNAMID's civilian staff (civil affairs, human rights, etc.) has deployed.

14. (SBU) UN officials also briefed donors on their response to communities affected by attacks from the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA). They stated that following the December 14 joint military operation by Uganda and the DRC with support from Southern Sudan against the LRA ("Operation Lightning Thunder") there has been a

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visible escalation of LRA attacks in northern DRC. They said that approximately 180,000 people have been displaced in northern DRC, while 15,000 have crossed the border into Southern Sudan and 30,000 remain displaced within Southern Sudan. At the request of CDA, UNMIS Political Affairs Officers briefed the donors on the situation in Malakal following the outbreak of fighting in there (ref B).

15. (SBU) UN officials also briefed the donors on funding for recovery efforts in Abyei, noting that almost \$32 million had been committed as of February 2009. They stated that while there were substantial overall funds committed, some sectors were doing better than others, as there were gaps in Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH), Protection, and Non-Food Items (NFIs). They also noted that humanitarians continue to face bureaucratic impediments (such as visas) imposed by the Humanitarian Affairs Committee (HAC) as well as by the security services. They said they were also affected by difficulties due to the lack of funding for the Abyei Civil Administration. In response, several donor principals including CDA Fernandez, and the EU and Dutch Ambassadors commented that the briefing painted an all too rosy picture of recovery efforts, and urged the UN to do more to pressure the GOS on bureaucratic impediments and funding gaps which are holding up an improvement on the ground in a still volatile situation in Abyei.

16. (SBU) Comment: Issues of access and insecurity will continue to be problematic for humanitarian activity in Darfur, and despite assurances from the GOS, could be further exacerbated by the potential fallout of an ICC indictment of President Bashir. The situation in Abyei remains very precarious, with only a small window of opportunity for humanitarian and other projects before the advent of the rainy season and ongoing obstructionism by HAC. In addition to the efforts of donor countries, the UN needs to be strongly encouraged to aggressively press the GNU to fund the Abyei Civil Administration and lift INGO impediments now rather than later if another clash between the CPA parties is to be averted. End comment.

FERNANDEZ